GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:505
ANSWERED ON:20.02.2003
AMENDMENT IN CABLE NETWORK ACT
DADICHILUKA VEERA GOURI SANKARA RAO;KAMBALAPADU E. KRISHNAMURTHY;M.H. AMBAREESH;SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL;SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken to follow up action after passing of cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill 2002 to allow viewers to select channels and pay only for those selected;

(b) the action taken to ensure that all pay channels to go through a set-top box;

(c) the name of cities where the act will come into force;

(d) other steps proposed to ensure that cable owners do not harass viewers with frequent increase of charges;

(e) whether the Government have estimated the amount viewers will have to shell after the enforcement of the act; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d): In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of Section 4A of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, the Central Government by Notification dated 14.1.2003 has notified the 15th day of January, 2003 as the date within six months from which it shall be obligatory for every cable operator to transmit/re-transmit programme of every pay channel through an addressable system in the four metros cities, namely
(i) Chennai Metropolitan area;
(ii) Municipal Council of Greater Mumbai area;
(iii) Kolkata Metropolitan area;
(iv) National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Govt. has also constituted a Task Force to oversee the implementation of the Conditional Access System (CAS). The focus of its deliberations will be on protection of consumer interest.

(e) & (f): . The Task Force is entrusted with the issue of pricing of the basic tier of free-to-air channels. The consumer will benefit because he will pay only for those channels, which he chooses to watch.